

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SEOUL 00477 230908Z

21

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 AID-05 SAM-01 SAB-01 NIC-01

ACDA-05 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00 CIEP-01 /096 W

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R 230722Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8034

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 0477

EO 11652: 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, JO, LE, SA, IS, KS

SUBJECT: ROK RELATIONS WITH MIDDLE EASTERN COUNTRIES

1. ROK ASSISTANT FOREIGN MINISTER KIM CHUNG TAE
PROVIDED DCM FOLLOWING RUNDOWN JAN 21 OF HIS RECENT
MIDDLE EAST TRIP AND CURRENT MOFA PLANS AND THINKING.

2. SAUDI ARABIA: KIM SAID HE HAD VISITED JIDDA
ON INSTRUCTIONS FROM BLUE HOUSE TO SOUND OUT PROS-
PECTS FOR LARGE-SCALE SAUDI CASH LOAN TO ROKG. HE
HAD REPORTED THAT PROSPECTS SUFFICIENTLY ENCOURAGING
TO WARRANT FURTHER DISCUSSIONS BY MORE SENIOR ROK
OFFICIAL. AS RESULT, ON FEB 15 PRESIDENTIAL ADVISOR
AND FORMER FONMIN CHOE KYU-HA, WHO SUCCESSFULLY
DEALT WITH SAUDIS DURING 1973 OIL EMBARGO CRISIS,
WILL PROCEED TO JIDDA FOR THIS PURPOSE. KIM WILL
ACCOMPANY. CHOE HOPES TO NEGOTIATE LOAN IN US\$ 200-
500 MILLION RANGE. ROKG WILL NOT OFFER MUCH IN TERMS
QUID PRO QUO BEYOND WILLINGNESS TO DISPATCH SUCH
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PAGE 02 SEOUL 00477 230908Z

ENGINEERS AND OTHER TECHNICIANS SUCH AS SAUDIS MAY

REQUIRE TO ASSIST IN DEVELOPMENT PLANS. HOWEVER, KIM BELIEVES THAT SAUDIS ARE SUFFICIENTLY SYMPATHETIC TO ROK, INCLUDING LATTER'S ARGUMENT THAT ITS PRESENT B/P DIFFICULTIES ARE PRIMARILY RESULT OF OIL PRICE INCREASES, AND SUFFICIENTLY IMPRESSED WITH ROK ECONOMIC PROSPECTS, TO WARRANT THEIR AGREEMENT TO EXTEND LOAN. KIM SAID TRANSACTION WOULD INVOLVE STRAIGHT CASH LOAN FOR WHICH HANDLING ARRANGEMENTS YET TO BE WORKED OUT.

3. COMMENT: CHOE KYU HA IS EXTREMELY CAUTIOUS AND IT UNLIKELY HE WOULD RISK LOSS OF FACE UNLESS PRETTY WELL ASSURED THAT NEGOTIATIONS WOULD BE SUCCESSFUL.

4. LEBANESE/ROK RELATIONS: FOLLOWING LATE DECEMBER EXECUTION OF MADAME PARK'S ASSASSIN, ALL MEMBERS OF ROK TRADE OFFICE HAD RETURNED. ALL BUT OFFICE DIRECTOR HAD BEEN WITHDRAWN EARLIER BECAUSE OF REPORTS THAT TERRORISTS IN LEBANON MIGHT ATTEMPT FORCE ASSASSIN'S RELEASE BY TAKING OFFICE MEMBERS AS HOSTAGES.

5. ARAB/ISRAELI ISSUE: KIM SAID ARAB PRESSURE AGAINST ROK FOR MAINTAINING RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL REMAINS CONSTANT. ARAB EFFORT EMPHASIZES CONTRASE BETWEEN FULL NORTH KOREAN SUPPORT ON ALL ISSUES AND FACT THAT ROK CONTINUES TO PERMIT ISRAELI AMBASSADOR TO RESIDE IN SEOUL. OBJECTIVE IS OBVIOUSLY TO FORCE LATTER'S WITHDRAWAL. KIM SAID ONLY ARGUMENT WHICH ARABS APPEAR TO RESPECT IS THAT ROK MUST MAINTAIN RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL BECAUSE US CONGRESS WOULD RESPOND TO JEWISH LOBBY IN U.S. BY CUTTING OFF MILITARY AID IF ROK WERE TO BREAK RELATIONS WITH ISRAELIS; THIS WOULD LEAVE ROK, WHICH IN FOREFRONT FIGHT AGAINST COMMUNISM, EXPOSED TO ATTACK FROM NORTH. KIM DODGED QUESTION ABOUT ROK INTENTIONS TO ACCREDIT AMBASSADOR RESIDENT ELSEWHERE TO ISRAEL, BUT HIS REMARKS MADE IT PERFECTLY CLEAR THAT ROK NOT CONTEMPLATING ANY SUCH MOVE.

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 SEOUL 00477 230908Z

6. ROK/JORDAN RELATIONS: KIM WAS MOST APPRECIATIVE OF AMBASSADOR PICKERING'S ASSISTANCE AND ADVICE REGARDING EARLY ESTABLISHMENT OF ROK EMBASSY IN AMMAN. HE SAID DECISION TO DO SO SOON HAS BEEN VIRTUALLY MADE AND WILL PROBABLY BE ANNOUNCED FOLLOWING LATE JANUARY MEETING IN SEOUL OF ROK MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICAN CHIEFS OF MISSION.

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